

Drought and Conservation FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What mandatory water use restrictions are in place?

The mandatory water use restrictions include:

- Spray irrigation is limited to one day a week. Each community has a designated watering day. Please refer to the table below to determine your watering day.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Ross	San Rafael	San Quentin	Mill Valley	Woodacre
Tiburon	All other unincorporated areas in Marin County	Sausalito		Larkspur
Belvedere		Corte Madera		Fairfax
San Geronimo		San Anselmo		Greenbrae
Forest Knolls				Kentfield
Lagunitas				

- Drip irrigation is limited to any two days per week.
- Spot water by hand, when necessary, can be done on any day of the week.
- Outdoor watering is prohibited between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. to prevent evaporation.
- Covers are required for all pools and spas. Liquid covers are acceptable.
- Do not wash vehicles at home. Use a carwash that reuses water or uses recycled water instead.
- Do not power wash homes or businesses
- Do not wash driveways or sidewalks.
- Do not waste water. Flooding gutters is prohibited.
- Leaks must be fixed within 48 hours of being discovered.

For a full list of restrictions and information about enforcement and variances, visit Marinwater.org/WaterRules.

Note: Recycled water for irrigation is exempt from the water use restrictions.

How severe is this drought?

We are in a historic drought. We have had two consecutive dry years, and rainfall levels the past two years have been the lowest we have on record in more than 140 years. Our reservoir storage capacity is the lowest it has been in more than 40 years. Marin Water’s Board of Directors declared a water shortage emergency in April, and adopted mandatory water use restrictions in June and July to preserve our limited water supply.

Is Marin Water better prepared for drought today?

Yes. We are always working to manage our water supply effectively and efficiently. We are also looking at both short and long-term solutions to what is a statewide crisis. Since the last mega-drought of the 1970s, the district has made significant improvements to increase our water supply:

- Kent Lake's capacity was doubled in 1983.
- Soulajule Reservoir was added to our system as a seventh reservoir, further increasing capacity.
- A direct pipeline was built to Sonoma Water's Russian River system. We receive about 25% of our water through this pipeline.
- A successful partnership with Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District provides recycled water to a portion of our service area, saving potable water for essential uses.
- An enhanced leak detection team is in place to find and repair leaks on district pipelines and save water.
- A more comprehensive water conservation program was developed. We offer programs and incentives, including rebates on lawn replacements, graywater systems and "smart" irrigation controllers.
- More rebates were added to address the current drought, including rebates for Flume flow meters that provide real-time water usage data directly to customers, hot water recirculators as well as high-efficiency washing machines and toilets. We also provide free water-efficient fixtures.

Learn more at Marinwater.org/Rebates or email us at Conservation@Marinwater.org.

Can Marin Water use recycled water to help with the drought?

Marin Water does have a recycled water program that currently serves some customers in the Terra Linda area of San Rafael. We recently opened a free recycled water filling station across from the Civic Center on Armory Drive in San Rafael. Marin residents are encouraged to pick up between 5 and 300 gallons of recycled water per trip to be used outdoors for irrigation or washing hardscapes. Visit Marinwater.org/RecycledWater for additional details and operating hours.

We are also working with the sanitation agencies in our service area to use recycled water for their sewer cleaning operations, and requiring the use of recycled water for dust control.

Recycled water is not a realistic option to address the current drought because it requires a separate distribution system to avoid the possibility of cross-contamination with potable water and any expansion of our current system would take a significant amount of time and financial commitment.

Is graywater an option in Marin?

Yes. The County of Marin made regulatory changes allowing the installation of residential graywater systems. Graywater systems allow you to reuse water from your washing machine for irrigation. We offer free graywater webinars and a \$100 rebate on graywater kits. Visit Marinwater.org/Rebates to learn more about our graywater program.

Will you put a pipeline across the Richmond Bridge?

We are currently exploring the feasibility of constructing a pipeline on the Richmond-San Rafael bridge with the goal of having the first water transfer completed in June of 2022. The pipeline would be able to supply 15 million gallons per day, which would meet the districts identified demand for indoor essential uses. The pipeline is one of several options the district is exploring including desalination, expanded conservation programs and increased water use restrictions.

Why doesn't Marin Water dredge reservoirs to create more water storage?

Dredging our reservoirs to create more room for water storage sounds like a simple project, but it is not. Several factors make such a project costly, complex and time consuming. Dredging the reservoirs would require complex engineering and studies to ensure the structural integrity of the reservoir is not compromised. The removal and disposal of dredged material is also very costly. A dredging project, if possible, would take years to plan, permit, and implement.



For example, to dredge Nicasio Reservoir and add 1,000 acre-feet of storage, 1.6 million cubic yards of sediment would need to be trucked away. This would require 40,000 trips using standard dump trucks.

Is Marin Water considering building a desalination plant to address the current drought?

Yes, the district is exploring the possibility of utilizing a temporary desalination facility to supplement our current water supply. A temporary facility is estimated to cost \$35 million and would provide 5.4 million gallons of water per day. Currently, the water demand for essential indoor uses is 15 million gallons of water per day. So, while desalination would help offset that demand, it would not fully meet it.

Is Marin Water asking residents to limit their water user to a certain amount?

We are asking customers to save as much water as they can. Our collective goal is a 40 percent reduction in overall water use districtwide. We are not asking all customers to individually save 40 percent. Some customers can reduce their water use, while others are already saving water and using minimal amounts. We are recommending an indoor water use target of 55 gallons per person, per day. A range of 35 to 55 gallons per person would be considered efficient use, and is ideal.

Is Marin Water allowing new water hookups during the drought?

Marin Water is not a planning agency, and ultimately does not decide whether to issue building permits. The district is able to implement landscape and efficiency requirements and has done so. Currently, only 25% of a residential landscape area can be comprised of high water use plants. For commercial properties, only 14% of the landscape area can be comprised of high water use plants. All water using fixtures must be high-efficiency models (clothes washers, faucets, toilets), and irrigation controllers must be equipped with moisture and rain sensors to avoid over-watering.

As we continue to monitor drought conditions and our water supplies, additional restrictions may be considered.

What can I do to help save water?

Everyone should save as much water as possible. The biggest savings can be found through reducing outdoor water use. Turn off your irrigation system and water only by hand when necessary. Follow the water use restrictions, limit irrigation, do not wash vehicles at home, do not power wash homes and businesses, and do not wash sidewalks and driveways. Replacing your lawn with drought-resistant landscaping saves large amounts of water, and we offer to help.

Simple changes to your daily routine will also make a difference. Taking shorter showers, turning off the water while brushing your teeth, and doing dishes and laundry only when you have full loads will save water. Using a bucket to capture and reuse the water from your shower while you wait for the water to get warm also saves water.

Other ways to save water include:

- Install a Flume Smart Home Water Monitor to get real-time data on your water use to help you detect leaks and save water. It is easy to install and straps on to your existing water meter. Purchase and install your Flume, and pay \$50 plus tax and shipping with your Marin Water discount. Visit [Flumewater.com/Marin](https://flumewater.com/Marin) to order.
- Request a personalized review of your water usage. A water efficiency expert will create an individualized plan to save water at your home or business.
- Make sure you have water-efficient fixtures. We offer free hose shutoff nozzles, faucet aerators and showerheads to customers.
- Replace your lawn and get a rebate of \$3 per square-foot.
- Install a “smart” irrigation controller that automatically adjusts to the weather to deliver just the right amount of water.
- Check for leaks and fix them as soon as you find them. We offer free leak detection dye tablets.
- Replace your older washing machine with a high-efficiency model and apply for a rebate of up to \$100.
- Cover your pool or spa with a new cover and get a rebate of up to \$100.
- Install a new hot water recirculating system and get a rebate of up to \$50.



Our website is a great resource. Visit Marinwater.org/Conserve for information about drought and our daily water supply, conservation tips, water-saving rebates and programs, and water conservation resources.

I already save water, what else can I do?

Thank you for your water conservation efforts! You can help us spread the word by talking to friends and family about the urgent need to save water. You can also place a water conservation yard sign at your home or business. Contact Conservation@MarinWater.org or call 415.945.1520 to schedule a contactless pickup.

Join our Water Watch team and be on the lookout for water waste. If you see water waste, you can report it using this online form: marinwater.org/forms/water-waste-report, call 415-945-1523, or send an email to Conservation@MarinWater.org. Please include photos or videos and as much detail as possible when submitting a report. This will help the district respond as quickly as possible to address water waste.

How do I determine how much water I am saving?

Marin Water reads all our customers' water meters and sends out a bill with water consumption information every two months. You will be able to see how many gallons of water you used compared to the previous bill. In addition, you can manually read your water meter yourself to find out your water use. Marin Water is a member of the Alliance for Water Use Efficiency, which offers an online water calculator. Using this calculator, you can estimate how much water you are using based on your household size and whether you have landscaping, high-efficiency toilets, etc. Go to www.home-water-works.org/calculator.

Why doesn't Marin Water do monthly billing instead?

Shifting to monthly billing would require significant cost, not only to update the software related to the billing system, but also to shift meter reading to a monthly schedule. That would require significantly more staff and customer support. There are benefits to having monthly data available for our customers and Marin Water's Board of Directors will be reviewing this issue, given the severity of the drought.

What are you doing about water wasters?

With new mandatory water use restrictions now in place, we will issue written warnings for first time violations. A second violation will result in a \$25 fine, and any subsequent violations will result in a \$250 fine.

Preventing water waste is essential to preserving our water supply. If you see water waste, report it by emailing us at Conservation@Marinwater.org, or calling us at 415-945-1523. You can also report water waste using our online form: Marinwater.org/Forms/Water-Waste-Report.

What is Marin Water doing to help businesses conserve?

We have rebate programs designed specifically for businesses. Visit Marinwater.org/Rebates to learn more. We also provide water efficiency consultations to make sure businesses are implementing all available water-saving practices. Marin Water provides signage, for example, "water served on request" signs for restaurants, and conservation cards for hotel customers and other businesses. Our Water Efficiency team is here to help: call 415-945-1520 or email Conservation@Marinwater.org.

Will we run out of water?

No. Marin Water is looking at a variety of options to secure additional emergency water supplies to ensure we continue to provide safe, high quality drinking water to our customers.